

# Political Empowerment of Women in Theni District of Tamil Nadu

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## Abstract

The political empowerment indicators consider their basic political rights, role in decision-making bodies of the state and the central governments, representation in policy-making, participation in political-campaigning, leadership quality and ability to politicize their problems. Research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted. It is a blue print for the collection, management and analysis of the data. The research design in the present study is descriptive in nature since it describes the phenomena of eradication of poverty. Men support higher educated women to participate in politics is the first ranked political empowerment political chances are less for higher educated women than men is the second ranked political empowerment, higher educated women politicians can participate in solving the social problems actively is the third ranked. The role of government in terms of policies and programs is very aggressive in respect of women's empowerment. Further, the hold of pressure groups and local politicians also has no such idea of ideas of women's empowerment.

**Keywords:** Age • Educational qualifications • Caste • Religion • Employment • Status

## Introduction

Political process is central to the empowerment process. In this process adequate information and resources have to be made available for women to make their own autonomous decision-making. Empowerment is used to describe a process by which women become conscious of their own situation and organize collectively to gain greater access to public services. The political empowerment indicators consider their basic political rights, role in decision-making bodies of the state and the central governments, representation in policy-making, participation in political-campaigning, leadership quality and ability to politicize their problems.

## Need for the study

India is a country characterized by diversity, contrasts and contradictions. According to Human Development Index (HDI) assigned by the United Nations Development Programmer, India assumes extremely low position in terms of human development, though assumes a high position as an exporter of software in the world. Half of the population of India constitutes women. Indian women still have a low level of representation in the parliament of the Country and also assemblies in various states. In traditional societies, women empowerment cannot happen overnight. It takes decades to produce constructive results. Gender barriers still continue particularly in rural areas though the saying goes on "women are equal to men". Due to the presence of socio-economic constraints in rural areas, the potential of women have not been fully utilized and they have been further pushed back into the social hierarchy. Work life balancing technique and empowerment in taking household decisions could improve the working conditions of working group of women and reduce the stress. Hence, the present study made an attempt to study the eradication of poverty through women empowerment in Theni District [1].

## Statement of the problem

Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in our

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society. Empowering women is a life cycle process and therefore, policies must be framed at every stage to suit the particular needs of the women. The contribution of women to the economic and social development could be possible only when women are empowered at every stage of life cycle [1]. In the women empowerment process, the self-help group (SHG) acts only as a window for development of rural women folk by usage of micro finance and interaction. The need of the day is to impart the knowledge of women by Higher education and training. Focus is to be given on empowering women and girls, because they are capable of bringing drastic changes in the society. Efforts have still to be taken by all in making strategic approach to the empowerment of women. Though the women in rural areas are capable of hard working and motivated, they are not aware of the different development programs and schemes announced by the Government and private organizations. Empowering women must be a united approach which involves attention of all stakeholders. The rural women entrepreneurs are finding it difficult in marketing their products because of poor educational background. Though the women are having basic knowledge and understanding, they are not able to enter into business contracts, avail of loan facilities and incentive schemes, taxation procedures etc. due to lack of education and training. In order to address the above issues, a effort has been taken by the researcher to study the eradication of poverty through women empowerment in Theni District.

Empowerment of women has emerged as an important issue in our society. Empowering women is a life cycle process and therefore, policies must be framed at every stage to suit the particular needs of the women. The contribution of women to the economic and social development could be possible only when women are empowered at every stage of life cycle [2]. In the women empowerment process, the self-help group (SHG) acts only as a window for development of rural women folk by usage of micro finance and interaction [3]. The need of the day is to impart the knowledge of women by Higher education and training. Focus is to be given on empowering women and girls, because they are capable of bringing drastic changes in the society. Efforts have still to be taken by all in making strategic approach to the empowerment of women. Though the women in rural areas are capable of hard working and motivated, they are not aware of the different development programmers and schemes announced by the Government and private organizations. Empowering women must be a united approach which involves attention of all stakeholders. The rural women entrepreneurs are finding it difficult in marketing their products because of poor educational background. Though the women are having basic knowledge and understanding, they are not able to enter into business contracts, avail of loan facilities and incentive schemes, taxation

procedures etc. due to lack of education and training. In order to address the above issues, an effort has been taken by the researcher to study the eradication of poverty through women empowerment in Theni District.

### Objectives of the study

The objectives of the present study are:

- i. To exhibit the profile of the respondents in Theni district.
- ii. To identify the dimension of empowerments among the respondents.
- iii. To analyse the association between the profile of the respondents and dimension of empowerment.
- iv. To offer suggestions for enhancing the eradication of poverty through women empowerment based on the findings of the study.

### Period of the study

The period of the study ranges from June 2020 to June 2021.

## Methodology

Research methodology is a scientific and systematic way to solve research problems. The research methodology deals with research methods and taken into consideration the logic behind the methods. In total, the research methodology of the study includes research design, sampling framework, data collection, framework of analysis and limitations.

### Design of the study

Research design is the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted. It is a blue print for the collection, management and analysis of the data. The research design in the present study is descriptive in nature since it describes the phenomena of eradication of poverty through empowerment in Theni District. Apart from this, the present study has its own objectives and pre-determined methodology. It is purely descriptive in nature.

### Data

The present study is completely based on the primary data. The secondary data collected from the books, journals, magazines and websites were used to form the theoretical framework of the study and the review of literature. The primary data was collected personally with the help of structured questionnaire.

### Chi square test

In order to examine the relation between the degree of consultation and profile variables, the Chi-Square test of the following formula was applied:

$$\text{Chi Square} = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E} \sim X^2(n-1) \text{ degrees of freedom}$$

Where,

O=Observed Frequency,

E=Expected Frequency,

r=Number of Rows,

c=Number of Columns.

Chi-Square test has been administered to test the association between the levels of various dimensions of women empowerment with respect to demographic profile of the respondents.

### Limitations of the study

The present study is subjected with the following limitations:

- The present study is confined to Theni District only.
- The answers given by the respondents towards eradication of poverty

through women empowerment may be affected by the personal value judgment.

- The aspects of eradication of poverty through women empowerment have been measured with the help of the variables drawn from previous studies.

- All the descriptive variables are measured by likert five point's scale.

### Literature review

There emphasized on empowerment of women under self-help groups. His study revealed the effectiveness of the self-help groups with linkage programmer and awareness among the rural folk [4]. The women groups having confident among them had created the changing attitudes and social outlooks. These women Self-Help Groups had brought a change in the mind of the conservative and illiterate rural women and proved that women are equal with men as active participants, decision maker in every sphere of life and also women can take part in socio-economic progress of rural areas of the country. He also emphasized the problems faced by the beneficiaries of the groups. It is observed that the groups were not getting revolving fund from the government agencies due to red tapism and lack of communication network. Yet, they are not getting the skill oriented training from the officials and technical persons. Although inadequate supervision, no availability of infrastructural facilities, apathy of bank staff, irregular repayment of schedule have created hindrances on the path of the achieving success of SHGs.

In their work empowerment of women through self-help groups and environmental management: Experiences of NGOs in Karnataka state, India, had focused the changes that women had experienced in both community and family decision making levels life after joining Self-help Group [5]. The study also showed that Self-help Groups not only helped women to save money through credit, but also helped them learn something about their rights through participation in social activities.

There had examined on economic empowerment of women through self-help groups [6]. The study was analytical and descriptive in nature which was based on both primary and secondary source. Primary data had been collected from 100 selected SHGs and 200 randomly selected women members of selected SHGs [7]. The study was undertaken to know the profile of the respondents and assess the effectiveness SHGs in the economic empowerment of women [8-10]. The study had found that the life of women was improved through SHG. It was also revealed that income of the SHG members after joining SHG was higher than the income before joining SHGs in both districts. The study had shown that SHG is a medium for promoting the habit of saving among the women and to enhance the quality of status of women as participant, decision maker and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life.

### Political empowerment scale

Women in India have lesser opportunities of public influence or for entering politics. Women also lack opportunities to move within the hierarchies without patronage of male leaders or mentors. The women's wings of political parties may have given visibility to women in the form of a platform for participation rather than integrating them into central power structures. Women do not have necessary resources to enter and compete in contemporary political arena.

The Political Empowerment Scale contained 21 items. Each of the items are assigned a score ranging from five (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree) as per the scoring pattern. It shows the result of political Empowerment status of the respondents with Mean, SD and Rank (Table 1).

It shows that men support higher educated women to participate in politics is the first ranked political empowerment variable with the mean value of 4.14, political chances are less for higher educated women

**Table 1.** Opinion in political empowerment scale.

| Status of the respondents   | Mean | SD   | Rank |
|---|------|------|------|
| Men support higher educated women to participate in politics  | 4.14 | 0.9  | 1    |
| Political chances are less for higher educated women than men   | 3.93 | 0.88 | 2    |
| Higher educated women politicians can participate in solving the social problems actively                 | 3.9  | 1.08 | 3    |
| Higher educated women are intellectually superior to other women and men and hence can take up leadership | 3.75 | 1.08 | 4    |
| Higher educated women and enrolling in electoral list and basic rights                                    | 3.73 | 1.28 | 5    |
| Higher educated women's and their sensitivity in political situation and position                         | 3.69 | 1.11 | 6    |
| Higher educated women and their political rights like men politician                                      | 3.65 | 1.15 | 7    |
| Higher educated women and formulating good gender and caste responsive legislation                        | 3.6  | 1.06 | 8    |
| Higher educated women negligence of their husband suggestions   | 3.58 | 0.8  | 9    |
| Higher educated women and their committeemen and competency leadership                                    | 3.53 | 1.43 | 10   |
| Higher educated women and straight forwardness  | 3.48 | 1.22 | 11   |
| Higher educated women and their role in the decision making process of the local government               | 3.44 | 0.84 | 12   |
| Involvement of higher educated women and contribution to women's problems in policy making                | 3.38 | 1.28 | 13   |
| Higher educated women's success and political undertakings  | 3.33 | 0.99 | 14   |
| Higher educated women and special allocation in reservations  | 3.33 | 1.15 | 15   |
| Higher educated women and political campaigning and public protests                                       | 3.33 | 1.07 | 16   |
| Affluent higher educated women and contest in the local and state election                                | 3.27 | 1.15 | 17   |
| Constitutional revisions and upholding justice for dalit women  | 3.19 | 1.21 | 18   |
| Higher educated women and their involvement in budget allocation for them                                 | 3.14 | 1.31 | 19   |
| Higher educated women and contest in local body election, legislative and parliamentary election          | 3.04 | 1.1  | 20   |
| Rural higher educated women and grama sabha meetings  | 2.71 | 1.26 | 21   |

than men is the second ranked political empowerment variable with the mean value of 3.93, higher educated women politicians can participate in solving the social problems actively is the third ranked variable with the mean value of 3.90 that affects the political empowerment. Higher educated women are intellectually superior to other women and men and hence can take up leadership and higher educated women enroll their names in electoral list and exercise their basic rights are the fourth and fifth ranked variables with the mean value of 3.75 and 3.73 respectively. Higher educated women are not sensitive to their political situation and position and higher educated women demand their political rights like men politician are sixth and seventh ranked political empowerment variables with the mean value of 3.69 and 3.65 respectively. Higher educated women are capable of formulating good gender and caste responsive legislation and higher educated women need not vote for the political candidate whom her husband suggests are the next ranked variables with the mean value of 3.60 and 3.58. Higher educated women are capable of being committed and competent leaders are the tenth ranked variable with the mean value of 3.53. Higher educated women influence in decision making bodies can improve budget allocation for them (3.14), higher educated women are interested to contest in local body election, legislative and parliamentary election (3.04) and rural higher educated women participate in the gramasabha meetings regularly (2.71) are the last ranked political empowerment variables.

## Results

### Level of political empowerments and age of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerments and the age of the respondents. The classification of respondents by age and level of political empowerment is given below.

The above table shows the distribution of respondents by the level of political empowerment and the age. The p value is less than 0.01. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and the age of the respondents (Table 2).

### Level of political empowerments and educational qualification of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerments and the educational qualification of the respondents. The classification of respondents by educational qualification and level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and educational qualifications. The p value is less than 0.01, hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and educational qualifications of the respondents (Table 3).

### Level of political empowerments and caste of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerments and the caste of the respondents. The classification of respondents by caste and level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and their caste. The p value is less than 0.01, hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and the caste of the respondents (Table 4).

### Level of political empowerments and religion of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerments and the religion of the respondents. The classification of respondents by religion and the level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and religion. The p value is less than 0.01, hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and religion of the respondents (Table 5).

**Table 2.** Level of political empowerments and age of the respondents.

| Age (in years) | Political empowerment |             |            | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|                | Low                   | Medium      | High       |       |                  |         |
| 20-29          | 138 (39.2)            | 133 (37.78) | 81 (23.01) | 352   | 188.633          | 0.000*  |
| 30-39          | 63 (42.86)            | 65 (44.22)  | 19 (12.93) | 147   |                  |         |
| Above 40       | 49 (37.4)             | 22 (16.79)  | 60 (45.8)  | 131   |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>   | 250                   | 220         | 160        | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 3.** Level of political empowerments and educational qualification of the respondents.

| Qualification       | Political empowerment |            |            | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|                     | Low                   | Medium     | High       |       |                  |         |
| Arts & Science (UG) | 114 (51.58)           | 49 (22.17) | 58 (26.24) | 221   | 61.505           | 0.000*  |
| Arts & Science (PG) | 32 (30.77)            | 62 (59.62) | 10 (9.62)  | 104   |                  |         |
| Professional (UG)   | 56 (35.9)             | 55 (35.26) | 45 (28.85) | 156   |                  |         |
| Professional (PG)   | 18 (24.66)            | 27 (36.99) | 28 (38.36) | 73    |                  |         |
| Diploma             | 17 (33.33)            | 20 (39.22) | 14 (27.45) | 51    |                  |         |
| Others              | 13 (52)               | 7 (28)     | 5 (20)     | 25    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>        | 250                   | 220        | 160        | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 4.** Level of political empowerments and caste of the respondents.

| Caste        | Political empowerment |             |             | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|              | Low                   | Medium      | High        |       |                  |         |
| BC           | 117 (37.74)           | 50 (16.13)  | 143 (46.13) | 310   | 178.11           | 0.000*  |
| MBC          | 114 (45.97)           | 120 (48.39) | 14 (5.65)   | 248   |                  |         |
| SC/ST        | 19 (26.39)            | 50 (69.44)  | 3 (4.17)    | 72    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b> | 250                   | 220         | 160         | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 5.** Level of political empowerments and religion of the respondents.

| Religion     | Political empowerment |            |             | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|              | Low                   | Medium     | High        |       |                  |         |
| Hindu        | 129 (37.72)           | 86 (25.15) | 127 (37.13) | 342   | 72.509           | 0.000*  |
| Christian    | 79 (42.7)             | 95 (51.35) | 11 (5.95)   | 185   |                  |         |
| Muslim       | 36 (39.13)            | 36 (39.13) | 20 (21.74)  | 92    |                  |         |
| Others       | 6 (54.55)             | 3 (27.27)  | 2 (18.18)   | 11    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b> | 250                   | 220        | 160         | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

### Level of political empowerments and employment status of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerment and employment status of the respondents. The classification of respondents by their employment status and the level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and employment status. The p value is less than 0.01, hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and the employment status of the respondents (Table 6).

### Level of political empowerments and marital status of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerment and the marital status of the respondents. The classification of respondents by marital status and level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and their marital status. The p value is less than 0.01. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and the marital status of the respondents (Table 7).

### Level of political empowerments and age at the time of marriage of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerment and the age at the time of marriage of the respondents. The classification of respondents by their age at the time of marriage and the level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and their age at the time of marriage. The p value is less than 0.01. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerment and age at the time of marriage of the respondents (Table 8).

### Level of political empowerments and gap between children of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerments and the gap between children of the respondents. The classification of respondents by the gap between children and level of political empowerment.

The distribution the level of political empowerment and gap between the children of the respondents. The p value is less than 0.01. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerment and gap between the children of the respondents (Table 9).

### Level of political empowerments and family type of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference

between the level of political empowerment and family type of the respondents. The classification of respondents by family type and level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and family type. The p value is less than 0.01, hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and family type of the respondents (Table 10).

### Level of political empowerments and monthly income of the respondents

This analysis was carried out to find out if there is any difference between the level of political empowerment and monthly income of the respondents. The classification of respondents by their monthly income and level of political empowerment.

The distribution of respondents by level of political empowerment and the monthly income. The p value is less than 0.01, hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the level of political empowerments and monthly income of the respondents (Table 11).

## Discussion

Through lectures and seminars; awareness regarding women's education shall be propagated in a way to improve the women's higher education, employment entrepreneurial activities.

The role of government in terms of policies and programs is very

**Table 6.** Level of political empowerments and employment status of the respondents.

| Employment status   | Political empowerment |            |            | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|                     | Low                   | Medium     | High       |       |                  |         |
| Government employed | 50 (43.1)             | 53 (45.69) | 13 (11.21) | 116   | 50.753           | 0.000*  |
| Private employed    | 58 (50.88)            | 43 (37.72) | 13 (11.4)  | 114   |                  |         |
| Self employed       | 46 (28.05)            | 50 (30.49) | 68 (41.46) | 164   |                  |         |
| Unemployed          | 96 (40.68)            | 74 (31.36) | 66 (27.97) | 236   |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>        | 250                   | 220        | 160        | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 7.** Level of political empowerments and marital status of the respondents.

| Marital status    | Political empowerment |             |             | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|                   | Low                   | Medium      | High        |       |                  |         |
| Married           | 131 (45.8)            | 44 (15.38)  | 111 (38.81) | 286   | 190.923          | 0.000*  |
| Unmarried         | 83 (32.05)            | 134 (51.74) | 42 (16.22)  | 259   |                  |         |
| Widow             | 24 (42.86)            | 32 (57.14)  | 0 (0)       | 56    |                  |         |
| Divorce/Separated | 12 (41.38)            | 10 (34.48)  | 7 (24.14)   | 29    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>      | 250                   | 220         | 160         | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 8.** Level of political empowerments and age at the time of marriage of the respondents.

| Age at the time of marriage (in years) | Political empowerment |            |             | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|--|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|  | Low                   | Medium     | High        |       |                  |         |
| 15-19                                  | 9 (52.94)             | 4 (23.53)  | 4 (23.53)   | 17    | 50.110           | 0.000*  |
| 20-24                                  | 122 (45.19)           | 41 (15.19) | 107 (39.63) | 270   |                  |         |
| 25-29                                  | 24 (43.64)            | 31 (56.36) | 0 (0)       | 55    |                  |         |
| 30-34                                  | 12 (41.38)            | 10 (34.48) | 7 (24.14)   | 29    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>                           | 167                   | 86         | 118         | 371   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 9.** Level of political empowerments and gap between children of the respondents.

| Gap between children<br>(in years) | Political empowerment |            |             | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|                                    | Low                   | Medium     | High        |       |                  |         |
| 1-2                                | 20 (45.45)            | 14 (31.82) | 10 (22.73)  | 44    | 58.478           | 0.000*  |
| 3                                  | 122 (45.02)           | 41 (55.36) | 108 (39.85) | 271   |                  |         |
| Above 3                            | 25 (44.64)            | 31 (55.36) | 0 (0)       | 56    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>                       | 167                   | 86         | 118         | 371   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 10.** Level of political empowerments and family type of the respondents.

| Family type  | Political empowerment |            |             | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|              | Low                   | Medium     | High        |       |                  |         |
| Nuclear      | 155 (45.32)           | 76 (22.22) | 111 (32.46) | 342   | 55.220           | 0.000*  |
| Joint        | 95 (32.99)            | 144 (50)   | 49 (17.01)  | 288   |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b> | 250                   | 220        | 160         | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

**Table 11.** Level of political empowerments and monthly income of the respondents.

| Monthly income | Political empowerment |             |            | Total | Chi square value | p value |
|----------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|-------|------------------|---------|
|                | Low                   | Medium      | High       |       |                  |         |
| Low            | 122 (36.53)           | 113 (33.83) | 99 (29.64) | 334   | 19.016           | 0.004*  |
| Medium         | 105 (43.39)           | 80 (33.06)  | 57 (23.55) | 242   |                  |         |
| High           | 23 (42.59)            | 27 (50)     | 4 (7.41)   | 54    |                  |         |
| <b>Total</b>   | 250                   | 220         | 160        | 630   |                  |         |

\*Significant at 1% level. Figures in the parenthesis are percentages.

aggressive in respect of women's empowerment. Further, the hold of pressure groups and local politicians also has no such idea of ideas of women's empowerment.

## Conclusion

Men support higher educated women to participate in politics is the first ranked political empowerment variable with the mean value of 4.14, political chances are less for higher educated women than men is the second ranked political empowerment variable with the mean value of 3.93, higher educated women politicians can participate in solving the social problems actively is the third ranked variable with the mean value of 3.90 that affects the political empowerment. Higher educated women are intellectually superior to other women and men and hence can take up leadership and higher educated women enroll their names in electoral list and exercise their basic rights are the fourth and fifth ranked variables with the mean value of 3.75 and 3.73 respectively. Higher educated women are not sensitive to their political situation and position and higher educated women demand their political rights like men politician are sixth and seventh ranked political empowerment variables with the mean value of 3.69 and 3.65 respectively. Higher educated women are capable of formulating good gender and caste responsive legislation and higher educated women need not vote for the political candidate whom her husband suggests are the next ranked variables with the mean value of 3.60 and 3.58. Higher educated women are capable of being committed and competent leaders are the tenth ranked variable with the mean value of 3.53. Higher educated women influence in decision making bodies can improve budget allocation for them (3.14), higher educated women are interested to contest in local body election, legislative and parliamentary election (3.04) and rural higher educated women participate in the gramasabha meetings regularly (2.71) are the last ranked political empowerment variables.

There are association between different levels of political empowerment and age, educational qualifications, caste, religion, employment, status, marital status, age at the time of the marriage, gap between the children, family type and monthly income of the respondents.

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